

# Photographic views and description of the great Baltimore 175,000,000 fire

## STORY OF THE FIRE

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Sunday morning, February 7th, about half-past 10 o'clock, while half of Baltimore was on its way to church, fire broke out in the large wholesale dry goods house of John E. Hurst & Co., at the corner of Liberty and German streets. From this point it raged until 5:45 o'clock Monday afternoon, when the exhausted firemen finally succeeded in bringing its destructive course to a halt among the lumber yards on Union dock, at the foot of Falls avenue, more than a mile from where it had started.

Its path, which today resembles nothing so much as a huge crescent, embraces eighty blocks in the heart of the business section; more than 2,500 buildings are in ashes, including the Chamber of Commerce, Merchants and Manufacturers' Association's headquarters; the Stock Exchange; more than half the banks and financial houses in the city, and practically the whole of the dry goods district, and the retail clothing district along Baltimore street, from Liberty street to the Baltimore street bridge over Jones' Falls, over a mile in length.

The whole fire department was soon on hand, a general alarm having been turned in by Captain Jordan, of the Salvage Corps, whose company was the first on the scene.

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Appeals for help were at once sent to other cities—New York, Washington, Philadelphia, Wilmington, and nearby towns.

The fire had by this time covered eight city blocks, and was rapidly eating its way toward the corner of Baltimore and Charles streets, a high wind from the southwest directing the course of the destructive blaze. At this juncture dynamite was resorted to, but without avail. Several buildings—among them that of Armstrong, Cator & Co., on Baltimore street, near Charles—were destroyed in this manner, but nothing seemed to stop the spread of the fire.

The militia had by this time been ordered out, and a cordon was formed about the burned district by Brigadier General Riggs, who was in command.

The flames were defeated in their effort to consume the Courthouse, but the skyscrapers along Fayette street and Baltimore street were soon in ruins. After leaving them nothing but smoking and blackened walls, the flames swept on to the Falls, wrecking everything on East Baltimore street to Front on the north side. Here the wind changed to the north, and the fire took a southerly course down to the waterfront, burning everything on the south side of Baltimore street to the Falls, including the Maryland Institute over Marsh Market space and everything between Light street and the Falls, and Baltimore street and the waterfront. At 5:30 o'clock Monday afternoon the flames were among the lumber yards along Union dock, and, Acting Chief McAfee appreciating that the key of the situation was being contested, and that if the flames reached beyond the Falls nothing could keep them from continuing their destructive course through East Baltimore, concentrated his efforts at this point. Engine after engine was rushed to the scene, and with the gallant assistance of the fire boat Cataract, under Captain German, the great fire was at last conquered and became history.

From a spectacular standpoint, the fire was one of the most magnificent in history, particularly when the flames were raging among the sky-scrapers in the financial district.

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Great tongues of fire leaped into the air for hundreds of feet, and were distinctly seen at points more than 100 miles from Baltimore in Virginia and Pennsylvania.

Tongue fails, pen is inadequate, mind refuses to comprehend the extent of the disaster, but, some idea of the size of the district which has been swept may be gathered when it is stated that it includes more than 175 acres of ground—all of it in the heart of the business section.

*These photos are fully protected by law.*

Hopkins Place and German Street—Scene where Fire Started. Where No. 15 Engine Was Wrecked.

All That Is Left of the Carrollton Hotel.

German and Liberty Streets, looking East down German Street. Hurst Building directly in Front.

Baltimore Street, looking East from Liberty Street.

Daily Record to the Front and Calvert Building on the Left.

Looking through Cheapside, from the Harbor, (or Pratt Street Wharf.)

Baltimore and Gay Streets—Looking West. Continental Trust Building to Left, City Hall down to Right.

Liberty and Lombard—Looking East on Lombard.

Dynamite Gang—500 lbs. Dynamite back of Wagon.

Dangerous Spot—N. W. Cor. Pratt and Light Streets. Cellar Filled with Explosives.

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German Street—Looking West from Hopkins Place.

Vicinity of City Hall.

From Liberty Street through to Hopkins Place. Hopkins Savings Bank to Right

Remains of One of the Fireproof Buildings.

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